

is what they do. wearing hats and a shirt with a patch. They will be good

ating two-hour parking limits and

be a fluid and dynamic plan."

STORE

Gas was at 96 cents for a couple hours

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school student. She was surprised to see the number of cars in the lot because she didn't feel crowded inside the wide and many aisles, she said.

The garden center has expanded six-fold, said Mr. Freerks, the manager, and that makes a huge difference to garden center employee Pearl Carter.

"I came here from the old Wal-Mart and this just feels great," she said as she showed customers around the covered patio and pointed out the big oak tree, complete with a lively squirrel, that shades the outdoor covered garden center.

The sporting goods, pet, clothes, shoe, baby, personal hygiene, cosmetics, medicine, home decor, furniture, hardware, crafts, appliance and grocery departments are all noticeably bigger. The supercenter is complete with a McDonald's, a vision center, a family hair stylist, a professional photography studio, a mail and package center, a nail salon, and gas pumps.

It took only five weeks for store employees to set up shelves, stock merchandise and get ready for opening day, said Mr. Freerks, who added they started with just a roof, four walls and a big tile floor.

Lingerie Department Manager Malka Barth said the process was impressive.

"When you walked in, the store was completely bare. It was a lot of work, but building it from the ground up really gave me a sense of ownership here," she said. "I had never opened a store before."

On Wednesday customers found a mariachi band amongst the frozen foods. Other surprises included lots of free samplings of products and foods. They also found a giant fish tank full of bass parked out front.

With gasoline prices on the rise in the \$1.55 per gallon range, most customers couldn't pass up the 96-cent gasoline that lasted until 10 a.m. and drew very long lines of cars. Supercenter shopper Margie Guevara admitted she rolled in to the gas pump on fumes so she could really get her money's worth.

Customer Ray Hubenthal of

Georgetown had his cart stacked with deer corn and said he was glad the new Wal-Mart was creating competition for H-E-B.

"Every time I go into H-E-B it's crowded. I thought the new H-E-B on Williams Drive would relieve it, but people keep moving in," he said.

Amanda Cutright and her mother, Donna Gray, drove in from Liberty Hill to shop at the new superstore.

Wal-Mart transferred 100 employees from its old location, and about 300 new employees were hired to keep the store open 24 hours.

Mayor Nelson at the opening ceremony helped Mr. Freerks hand out 10 checks amounting to \$14,500 to Georgetown service groups and organizations.

The anticipation and excitement of the opening of Super Wal-Mart came to a climax just before the ribbon was snipped. Mr. Freerks asked his clapping employees, "What was here before?"

"Nothing!" they shouted. "W-A-L-M-A-R-T! Where the customer rules!"

Cathy Corral, "Salon of Triumph"

(at ME-ME Salon)

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